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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined fourth to seventh periodic reports of Trinidad and Tobago

Addendum

Information provided by Trinidad and Tobago in follow-up to the concluding observations*

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Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Introduction

1. On 18 July 2016, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) considered the combined fourth to seventh periodic reports of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (CEDAW/C/TTO/CO/4-7). In its concluding observations, the Committee requested the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to provide within one year, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraph 11d.

Definition of discrimination, legislative and policy framework

Paragraph 11d

2. In paragraph 11d, the CEDAW Committee reiterated its previous recommendation that the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago:

> Expedite the adoption of the national policy on gender and development, ensure that the definition of the term "gender" is in line with the Convention and, in particular, the Committee's general recommendation No. 28 (2010) on the core obligations of States parties under article 2 of the Convention and also ensure that issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights are addressed.

Expedite the adoption of national policy on gender and development

3. In February of 2017, the Draft National Policy on Gender and Development was referred to a special Sub-Committee of Ministers of Government for consideration. The Sub-Committee is supported by a Gender Specialist from the Gender Affairs Division. The Sub-Committee has held several meetings. Thus far, the Sub-Committee decided on its terms of reference and considered the following:

- The definition of gender used by several countries and organizations regionally and internationally. Among the definitions of the term "gender" which was forwarded to the Sub-Committee, was the definition of "gender" as contained in the Convention and, in particular, General Recommendation No. 28 (2010) on the core obligations of States Parties under Article 2 of the Convention, inter alia:

  The term "gender" refers to the socially constructed identities, attributes and roles for women and men and society's social and cultural meaning for these biological differences resulting in hierarchical relationships between women and men and in the distribution of power and rights favouring men and disadvantaging women.

The Committee will decide on the preferred definition at its next meeting.

- The issues raised at the consultations in 2014 and 2015 with religious and other keys stakeholders; and
- The list of relevant legislation impacting on the Draft NPGD.

4. The Gender Affairs Division is now updating the data contained in the Draft, paying particular attention to the situational analysis and focusing on areas/issues that impact Trinidad and Tobago. The draft will be updated to include reference to parenting issues, such as the provision of care and support for families and children. The Committee continues to meet with a view to finalizing the Policy in 2017.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

5. The Draft Policy references the issue of sexual and reproductive health, indicating that the "the area of sexual and reproductive health requires particular

attention in order to significantly reduce the incidence of maternal mortality and morbidity, and the high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS and STIs, especially among women aged 30-34 years."

6. The recommendation advanced in the Draft Policy for treating with the issue of sexual and reproductive health states inter alia:

> Promote gender sensitivity in the delivery of sexual and reproductive health care, including breast and cervical cancer, prostate cancer, male reproductive health and sexually transmitted diseases, through curricula review, enhancement of medical education, and ongoing training and retraining of all categories of health professionals.

7. Based on the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee in the Concluding Observations, the issue of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the 'revised' version of the NPGD will be strengthened in keeping with regional and global commitments to women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights.